



House of Representatives

File No. 751

General Assembly

January Session, 2001

(Reprint of File No. 341)

Substitute House Bill No. 6461
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 10, 2001

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CAMP HARKNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) There shall be a Camp Harkness Advisory
2 Council that shall have responsibility for the oversight of Camp
3 Harkness, including responsibility for addressing concerns with
4 respect to the overall operation of the camp and the health and safety
5 of persons who use the camp. The council shall consist of: (1) Two
6 members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
7 one of whom shall represent persons who use Camp Harkness and the
8 parents or guardians of such persons and one of whom shall represent
9 the Family Support Council established pursuant to section 17a-219c of
10 the general statutes; (2) two members appointed by the president pro
11 tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall represent persons who use
12 Camp Harkness and the parents or guardians of such persons and one
13 of whom shall represent the Southeastern Connecticut Association for
14 the Retarded; (3) one member appointed by the minority leader of the
15 House of Representatives who shall represent persons who use Camp
16 Harkness; (4) one member appointed by the minority leader of the

17 Senate who shall represent persons who use Camp Harkness; (5) one
18 member appointed by the first selectman of the town of Waterford;
19 and (6) two members appointed by the board of selectmen of the town
20 of Waterford, who shall represent the Camp Harkness Booster Club.
21 The initial appointments to the council shall be made not later than
22 August 1, 2001, to serve for a term of three years. Members appointed
23 after such initial appointments shall serve for a term of three years.
24 The council shall meet at such times and places as the council may
25 determine and shall select its own chairperson. Council members shall
26 serve without compensation. The director of Camp Harkness shall act
27 as liaison to the council. The manager of Harkness Memorial State Park
28 shall designate a representative who shall act as liaison to the council.

29 (b) The advisory council shall:

30 (1) Hold regular public meetings to discuss issues relating to the
31 operation of Camp Harkness and the health and safety of persons who
32 use the camp;

33 (2) Work with state agencies and private organizations that use the
34 camp to ensure public health and safety, proper facility maintenance
35 and effective programming, and work with such other boards and
36 commissions as the council deems appropriate;

37 (3) Improve communications with the public and state agencies,
38 boards and commissions in order to ensure the promotion of camp
39 facilities and programming, the promulgation of information
40 regarding camp services and efficient camp operations;

41 (4) Review Camp Harkness usage and develop year-round camp
42 use guidelines;

43 (5) Plan for the future of Camp Harkness;

44 (6) Facilitate problem resolution with respect to the camp;

45 (7) Review camp rules, regulations and procedures; and

- 46 (8) Study the financial structure of Camp Harkness.
- 47 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Affected Agencies: Departments of Mental Retardation and Environmental Protection

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation**State Impact:**

The bill as amended establishes a Camp Harkness Advisory Council. The council shall have oversight of Camp Harkness, a camp located at Harkness Memorial State Park and utilized by individuals with disabilities. A workload increase or reallocation of workload to both the Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Mental Retardation (DMR) will result as their representatives must act as liaisons to the Camp Harkness Advisory Council. The director of Camp Harkness (DMR) shall act as liaison and the manager of Harkness Memorial State Park (DEP) shall designate a representative who shall act as liaison. It is anticipated that due to the liaison's participation a workload increase (or reallocation of workload) will result, this can be handled within the available resources of the associated departments.

Currently, DMR provides various support services to Camp Harkness, the establishment of a council will result in no cost to the department.

House "A" eliminated the underlining bill and made various changes. As the underlining bill established a Camp Harkness Advisory Committee appointed by the Commissioner, House "A" made various changes including the name, appointed members and role of the council in addition to the above mentioned liaison participation. These changes do not alter the fiscal impact associated with the original bill, as there was no fiscal impact anticipated to result.

OLR AMENDED BILL ANALYSIS

sHB 6461 (as amended by House "A")

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CAMP HARKNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes a nine-member Camp Harkness Advisory Council with responsibility for oversight of the camp. This includes responsibility for addressing concerns about the camp's overall operation and the health and safety of camp users. Members are appointed by legislative leaders and municipal officials.

*House Amendment "A" replaces the original bill, which established an advisory committee appointed by the mental retardation commissioner to advise him on issues concerning Camp Harkness.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council members include:

1. two appointed by the House speaker, one representing users of Camp Harkness and their parents or guardians, and one representing the Family Support Council;
2. two appointed by the Senate president pro tempore, one representing camp users and their parents, and one representing the Southeastern Connecticut Association for the Retarded;
3. one each appointed by the House minority leader and the Senate minority leader representing camp users;
4. one appointed by the first selectman of Waterford; and

5. two appointed by the Waterford board of selectman representing the Camp Harkness Booster Club.

Initial appointments must be made by August 1, 2001 with terms for three years. Those appointed after the initial appointments also serve three-year terms. Members are not compensated. The council must select a chairperson and meet as it determines. The director of Camp Harkness must act as liaison to the council. The manager of Harkness Memorial State Park must designate a person to act as a council liaison.

COUNCIL DUTIES

The advisory council must:

1. hold regular public meetings addressing camp operations and health and safety matters;
2. work with state agencies and private organizations using the camp to ensure public health and safety, proper facility maintenance, and effective programming;
3. work with other boards and commissions the council finds appropriate;
4. improve communications with the public, state agencies, boards and commissions for promotion of camp facilities, programming, services, and efficient operation;
5. review the camp's usage and develop year-round usage guidelines;
6. plan for the camp's future;
7. facilitate problem solving; and
8. review camp rules and procedures, and study its financial structure.

BACKGROUND

Camp Harkness

Camp Harkness is in Waterford and is a 102-acre parcel originally part of the Harkness family estate. The property was willed to the state and donated for "public health." The Department of Mental Retardation has administrative responsibility for the camp.

Currently, the Association for Retarded Citizens of New London County, Southbury Training School, the Connecticut Institute for the Blind, and the United Cerebral Palsy Association run summer programs at the camp. The camp is open year-round to pass-holders (individuals and organizations serving people with disabilities) for day and overnight use.

Legislative History

The House referred the bill (File 341) to the Government Administration and Elections Committee on April 24. That committee reported the bill favorably without change on April 26. On May 2, the House referred the bill to the Legislative Management Committee which reported it favorably without change on May 8.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 0

Government Administration and Election Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 18 Nay 0

Legislative Management Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 16 Nay 5